



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE
Milwaukee County
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Milwaukee County Executive Chris Abele Announces \$4.1 Million HUD Grant to Help Fund County's Efforts on Homelessness

MILWAUKEE – Milwaukee County Executive Chris Abele today announced that the County's Housing Division will receive \$4.1 million in funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, an increase of more than \$580,000 over last year's award.

While many providers in Wisconsin and around the country saw their funding for homelessness programs held flat, the County was awarded an additional \$582,626 a year for rental assistance for chronically homeless families and individuals using the Housing First philosophy. This renewable funding -- which was awarded as a Bonus Project -- will help us serve an approximately 62 additional households per year and will go a long way to declaring a functional zero for chronic homelessness.

All new participants we are able to serve through the Bonus Project funding, which will be available on April 1, 2017, will also receive wraparound case management services as a part of the Housing Division's existing partnerships.

"Last year, hundreds of vulnerable Milwaukeeans spent their holidays in shelters or on the streets. This year, 200 of those individuals will spend the season in a place of their own thanks to our Housing Division's initiative to end chronic homelessness," County Executive Chris Abele said. "This financial support from the federal government, especially the new source of renewable funding, is a major step towards continuing that progress."

About Ending Chronic Homelessness in Milwaukee County

In July of 2015, our Housing Division launched Housing First in Milwaukee with a goal to house 300 individuals by 2018. This initiative focuses on the Housing First concept - that a homeless individual or family's first and primary need is to obtain stable housing. Other issues that affect the

household are addressed once housing is obtained. National data shows this model provides very successful outcomes and dramatically reduces public service costs.

Since launching the ending chronic homelessness initiative, we've housed more than 200 chronically homeless individuals and families through Housing First and other County programs, with a 99 percent housing retention rate and 100 percent participation in voluntary case management services.

When we move people into permanent housing first they are more likely to confront the root causes of why they became chronically homeless. Together, with our partners, we can give these individuals the options to take services on their own terms, allowing for choice and flexibility.

The Housing First initiative is a collaboration between: Milwaukee County Department of Health and Human Services Housing, Disability Services and Behavioral Health Divisions; City of Milwaukee; Milwaukee Police Department Homeless Outreach; Salvation Army; Cathedral Center; Hope House; Guest House; Community Advocates; landlords; building property partners; shelters, and more. The program is based on a national model that has proven to improve the lives of people involved, reduce homelessness and strengthen communities.

The partnerships in Milwaukee County's Housing First initiative provide resources for participants that leads to an increase in positive activities like working and keeping families together, while decreasing negative activities like drug and alcohol use and involvement in the criminal justice system. This dramatically decreases the costs associated with police time, emergency room visits and detox center stays.

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